

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend the claims as follows:

Claim 1 (Currently Amended): A method for preparing a light colored seasoning liquid, comprising forming a Koji-making material comprising a raw material mixture comprising (a) a first component comprising 0-40% soybeans and (b) a second component comprising 60-100% gluten and wheat, wherein the gluten is present in an amount of 25-100%, the wheat is present in an amount 0-75% relative to the total of the gluten-containing second component, the percentages being on a dry weight basis, adding 7-24% 22% salt water to said koji making material and subjecting the resulting mixture to fermentation by adding seed Koji, wherein the salt water is employed in a volume amount 1.35-1.50 times the weight of the raw material mixture, and wherein the fermentation is carried out for 2-3 months at 10°C; or for one month at 10°C and subsequently for a further 1-2 months at 20°C.

Claims 2-3 (Cancelled).

Claim 4 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the fermentation is carried out for 2-3 months at 10°C.

Claim 5 (Previously Presented): The method according to Claim 1, wherein the fermentation is carried out for one month at 10°C and subsequently for a further 1-2 months at 20°C.

Claims 6 (Cancelled).

Claim 7 (Previously presented): The method according to claim 1, wherein the amount of the first component is 0%.

Claim 8 (Previously Presented): A method for preparing a light colored seasoning liquid, comprising forming a Koji-making material comprising a raw material mixture comprising (a) a first component comprising 0-40% soybeans and (b) a second component comprising 60-100% gluten and wheat, wherein the gluten is present in an amount of 25-100%, the wheat is present in an amount 0-75% relative to the total of the gluten-containing second component, the percentages being on a dry weight basis, adding 7-24% salt water to said koji making material and subjecting the resulting mixture to fermentation by adding seed Koji, wherein the salt water is employed in a volume amount 1.50 times the weight of the raw material mixture, and wherein the fermentation is carried out for 2-3 months at 10°C; or for one month at 10°C and subsequently for a further 1-2 months at 20°C.

Claim 9 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 8, wherein the salt concentration is 7%.

Claim 10 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 8, wherein the salt concentration is 7.5%.

Claim 11 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 8, wherein the salt concentration is 15%.

Claim 12 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 8, wherein the salt concentration is 22%.

Claim 13 (Previously Presented): The method according to claim 8, wherein the salt concentration is 24%.

BASIS FOR THE AMENDMENT

Claim 1 has been amended by incorporating therein the limitation of Claim 12, as an upper salt concentration limit.